

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3891

INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 6771

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SO, US

SUBJECT: SIAD BARRE TELLS TOLBERT ABOUT US-SOMALIA RELATIONS

1. PRESIDENT TOLBERT CALLED ME IN NOVEMBER 25 TO PASS
ON SOMALIA PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE'S VIEWS ON US- SOMALIA RELATIONS.
BARRE, ACCORDING TO TOLBERT, HAD ASKED HIM TO DO SO.

2. TOBLERT OPENED BY NOTING BARRE'S ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT
FORD HAD BEEN IDENTICAL WITH HIS OWN: PRESIDENT FORD IS OBVI-
OUSLY GREATLY INTERESTED IN AND CONCERNED ABOUT AFRICAN PROBLEMS
AND ASPIRATIONS, AND IS WILLING TO HELP. BARRE HAD FOUND
PRESIDENT FORD OPEN AND FRANK, AND WILLING TO LEARN OF PROBLEMS
AFRICANS ARE FACING.

3. LAST ITEM IN TALKS BETWEEN BARRE AND TOLBERT HAD BEEN
FORMER'S CONCERNS ABOUT US-SOMALIA RELATIONS. BARRE, WHO HAD
BEEN VERY IMPRESSED WITH HIS VISIT TO US AND HAD IMPRESSED
TOLBERT WITH HIS SINCERITY, SAID HE WAS NOT AT ALL HAPPY ABOUT
US-SOMALIA RELATIONS, AND HOPED FOR A CHANGE FOR BETTER. HE HAD
FEELING USG BELIEVES HE IS LEANING TOWARD COMMUNISM. HE WANTED
TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT; HE HAS FORMULATED POLICIES AND PROGRAMS
WITH CERTAIN APPARENT SIMILIARTIES TO COMMUNISM BUT THEY ARE DUE
SOCIALIST ASPECTS OF HIS IDEAS, NOT IDEOLOGICAL COMMITMENT.
MOREOVER, THERE ARE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES, E.G., FAITH IN DEITY,
BETWEEN VIEWS OF HIMSELF AND HIS PEOPLE AND COMMUNISM. THESE
CAUSE COMMUNISTS TO CRITICIZE HIM AND CREATE PROBLEMS FOR HIM.

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BARRE SAID HE FELT HE WAS "OUT IN THE STREAM AND MIGHT HAVE TO

RUN TO THE COMMUNIST CAMP IF THE OTHERS DON'T ACCEPT" HIM. HE WAS AGAINST ANY COUNTRY'S HAVING BASES IN ANY OTHER, HOWEVER. BARRE CONVINCED TOLBERT OF HIS DEEP INTEREST IN "REPAIRING FRACTURES" IN US-SOMALIA RELATIONS, AND POINTED OUT EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS TO THIS END THAT HE HAD TAKEN. (BARRE SAID THAT WHILE HE WAS IN GUINEAN AN AMERICAN IN SOMALIA HAD BEEN FOUND IN A RESTRICTED AREA, BUT HAD BEEN IMMEDIATELY RELEASED AT BARRE'S ORDERS.)

4. ALTHOUGH BARRE HAS APPARENTLY BEEN ADVOCATING RECOGNITION OF CPR IN HIS TRAVELS, HE DID NOT DO SO HERE, ACCORDING TO TOLBERT. HE PRESUMES REASON FOR THIS IS HIS WELL-KNOWN AND CONSISTENT POSITION THAT GOL CAN HAVE RELATIONS WITH BOTH CPR AND TAIWAN, BUT WILL NOT BETRAY FRIENDSHIP WITH LATTER AS PRICE OF RELATIONS WITH FORMER.

5. I UNDERTOOK TO REPORT WHAT TOLBERT HAD TOLD ME AND SAID I WOULD PASS ON ANY REACTION FROM WASHINGTON.

6. IN CONCLUSION TOLBERT REITERATED HIS BELIEF THAT BARRE WAS SINCERE IN HIS DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. TOLBERT OFFERED TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY WE DESIRED TO THIS END.

MANFULL

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